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The Green Thumb

A Newsletter of Extension Horticultural Activities and Events
For York County Extension Volunteers

February 2006
Vol. 7, Issue 2
Kris Wessler,
Editor

Future Calendar Events

Mar 2, 9-12	Norfolk Master Gardeners Pruning Training at Botanical Gardens
Mar 3	Last day to pre-register for the Horticultural Extravaganza
Mar 3	Deadline for the Virginia Tree Workshop on Mar 8
Mar 8, 8:30-3:30	Virginia Tree Workshop at Virginia Western CC, Roanoke www.treesvirginia.org
Mar 11, 9-3	Horticultural Extravaganza at Tabb High School
Mar 11, 9-3	1 st Annual VCE Turf Conference at Midtown Community Center, Newport News
Mar 14, 9:30 AM	YCMG Monthly Planning Meeting at St. Luke's
Mar 14, 7-8:30 PM	ELC Committee Meeting at VCE - York County Conference Room
Mar 15, 12:00 N	HearSay Gardening on WHRO 89.5 FM
Mar 18	Home Gardener Program at York County Library, York County Branch
Mar 22 - 24	Jim at Unit Coordinator In-service Training, Roanoke
Mar 25	Home Gardener Program at York County Library, York County Branch
Mar 27 - 29	Jody at Unit Administrative Assistant Training, Blacksburg

For additions/corrections to the Calendar of Events contact Jody at 890-4940, or Kris Wessler at 988-0616 or e-mail jwessler@earthlink.net (put Green Thumb in the subject line). Ignore the computer-generated notice from Spamblocker. The deadline for *The Green Thumb* is ALWAYS the 15th of the month.

E-mail changes: If you have changes to any of the methods of communication to you please, notify Jody. We want to keep all communication channels open. Any changes will be posted to the weekly e-mails and will be in *The Green Thumb*.

Attention! The VCE MG record keeping system will be down February 3rd through February 13th. If you could check your 2005 calendars for hours volunteered and hours you were in training and drop your timesheets off at the office, email to me at dlange@infionline.net or snail mail to Judy Lange, 7 Robert's Landing Dr, Poquoson, VA 23662, we can get ahead of this interruption of service. Thanks. Judy Lange 868-7183

Master Gardener Mission Statement

Our mission, as trained volunteers in partnership with the York County, Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent, is to provide horticultural educational opportunities to the public through research-based horticultural programs and activities to enhance our environment, lives and community.

www.ext.vt.edu

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Notes from Jim

Greetings! Thank you to all who submit information to the Green Thumb. This is a great vehicle to keep all Master Gardeners aware of what we are doing. Please keep your information brief because of the 4-page format. We have a lot of up-dating and information sharing in this newsletter. Inactive Master Gardeners as well as fans read this newsletter online. Thanks for the good work that you do!

I am pleased that Harry Haley will be teaching the "Use of Office Resources to Research and Respond to Horticultural Questions" class in the Extension Office on February 15, from 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. This goes beyond basic phone answering and goes into the resources that can help you respond to questions. Space allows for a limit of five participants. Preregistration is required, call 890-4940.

Jim

E-mail changes: Mike Deibler - nmdib@earthlink.net

Janet Ledebuhr - cjledebuhr@verizon.net

New for You . . . at the Library The library has just received a pair of books that will be of interest to current and future tree stewards. A New Tree Biology, and its companion A New Tree Biology Dictionary by Alex L. Shigo, is an extensive examination of how trees grow (inside and outside) and potential threats to their health. Dr. Shigo, who has written many books about trees and tree health, constructed this book more as a slideshow than a conventional book, with hundreds of photographs accompanied by brief text. The photographs are in black and white, which at times makes it difficult to see some important details, but the sheer number of photos is commendable. The companion dictionary is also not a typical dictionary, but an explanation and comment on trees and their potential problems. Dr. Shigo shows that he has not only studied trees for over 30 years and "knows" them, but he also truly loves them. Although this book is not for the novice, it is highly recommended for those wanting more in-depth information on the world of trees. You'll find this pair of books in the Trees section of our library.

Janet Gecowets

Jamestown 2007 Red White and Blue Garden

The forerunner to America's Anniversary Garden was planted at the YC Learning Garden in July 2005. The garden is both a presentation and a demonstration garden, and is funded and maintained by the Learning Garden and its volunteers. I would like to thank the Learning Garden members for their commitment and their gracious support for the project. I would also like to individually thank some special Master Gardeners who have gone "above and beyond the call of duty" on this project: **Agnes Evans**, who conceived, designed, and constructed the unique and beautiful support structure that allowed us to "pitch" the garden up so it could be seen from the street, using recycled terra cotta pots in such a way that the support structure became a feature that rivaled the garden itself; **Jackie Lohr** for suggesting we position the bed like a billboard for oncoming traffic, for watering, weeding, and mulching without ever having to be asked; **Diane Short** for multiple deliveries of compost and mulch, physical labor in moving the materials, and always standing ready to grab a shovel or rake; **John Dickens** for donating the bamboo to create the trellises, and his help in getting them installed; **Barb Dunbar**, coordinator of the Junior Master Gardeners for her unfailing help and enthusiasm; **Teela Robertson** and **Carol Brower** for help with administrative tasks; and the **York County Junior Master Gardeners** and their parents for planting the garden. (Please forgive me if I have missed anyone!) And last but not least, the garden is about to be featured in the National Magazine published by the Federation of Garden Clubs, which is mailed internationally to thousands of members. *Clare Britcher*

The Green Thumb Newsletter is prepared for York
County Extension Volunteers by



James M. Orband
Extension Agent, ANR
And
Kris Wessler, Extension Volunteer



March Turf Madness VCE and the Newport News Master Gardeners are presenting the *1st Annual VCE Turf Conference* which will be held March 11 from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm at the Midtown Community Center in Newport News. The conference will include four 1 hour lectures on aspects of lawn care - (to include a presentation by Virginia Tech Turf Specialist, Mike Goatley). Lunch will be provided and vendors will be available to detail products and answer questions. Brochures are available at www.nnmastergardeners.org. *Libby Carmines, NN*

Yelp for Help! Every year we need to make new plant labels and price tags for the York County MG's Learning Garden Plant Sale, held the first Saturday in May. If anyone has surplus plastic Venetian Blinds that no longer are used, we'd appreciate having them donated to the Learning Garden. Please drop them off at the garden shed in the Learning Garden anytime. Thanks. steverae@pinn.net *Audrey Rae and Steve Hinderliter*

The Maymont Flower and Garden Show is a week or so earlier this year than in previous years. Dates are **Feb. 9 - 12th** at the **Greater Richmond Convention Center** in downtown **Richmond**. There will be NO VAN this year for transportation, just carpooling. We will be able to get early admission on Friday, February 10th at 8 a.m. sharp. Meet us at the **street level entrance of the Convention Center across from the parking deck** with your tickets in hand. If you miss the 8 a.m. admission with our group, you will have to get in line with the hordes waiting for the 9 a.m. regular admission. The only place we can purchase **advance tickets** in Hampton Roads is **Countryside Gardens**, 220 E. Mercury Blvd., Hampton **through Feb. 7th**. Some years the local garden centers have run out of tickets so it's best to buy early. THE SHOW IS NOT AT THE MAYMONT ESTATE on Hampton Street. Any questions call me at 868-8646 or captmi@cox.net *Eleanor Hill*

Learning Garden Work/Learn Day in the Learning Garden from **9:30AM – Noon**. We meet the **first Thursday of each month** in the Environmental Services Building on Service Road and then in the garden to work. Please save your old blinds for our plant sale labels and bring them to the Learning Garden. You can leave them behind the shed on the plant bench. More clay pots and saucers are also needed for the Red, White, and Blue Garden. These can be chipped or broken. Larry Riddick and the Wetlands Committee have recently been working on a grant proposal that Larry is applying for from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The money is needed to build a boardwalk through the wetlands area of the Learning Garden so the public can access the area and learn more about wetlands and their connection to the Chesapeake Bay. fbond203@cox.net *Felice Bond*

Plant Health Clinic dates have been set! The purpose of the Plant Health Clinics is to involve York County citizens in their own landscapes and learn how to use correct horticultural practices that will reduce their use of pesticides. Diagnosis and recommendation of landscaping problems occurs while walking around their landscape with Jim, Master Gardeners and the residents. A question and answer session closes the clinic.

April Clinics will be held on **Thursday, April 6 at 10:00 AM-12:00 noon** and **Wednesday, April 12, at 6:30 PM-8:00 PM**. Preview Clinics for April preparation will be on Friday, March 17 at 10:00 AM and 11:30 AM. Locations will be announced later.

May Clinics will be on **Tuesday, May 9 at 6:30-8:30 PM noon, Thursday, May 18 at 10-12 noon** and **Wednesday, May 24 at 6:30 PM-8:00 PM**. Preview Clinics to prepare for May Clinics will be on Tuesday, April 25 at 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM, and 1:00 PM. Locations will be announced at a later time.

You only need to attend the Preview Clinic that corresponds to the Plant Health Clinic you are participating in. In other words, one Preview Clinic/one Plant Health Clinic. Please contact me if you'd like to participate in this wonderful educational program. Phone 898-1275 or email: carolwtate@yahoo.com *Carol Tate*

Horticultural Therapy Group at York Convalescent Center, 13 Battle Road, Yorktown, VA 23692 - The next session will be **Tuesday, February 28 at 10:15 AM**. Please contact Anita Lee to volunteer, or if you have any supplies to donate: 766-1788(H), 810-8532(C), or e-mail leeproamt@cox.net. Volunteers are needed to pick up donated flowers from florist shops in the area and to prepare floral supplies the day before. Also, donations of wet foam (used or new), plastic laundry caps or other floral supplies would be appreciated. Please bring clippers or scissors and some greenery/flowers from your garden if possible. A big THANK YOU to all the dedicated volunteers who participate regularly and make this day so enjoyable for all!
Anita Lee

Bird FanFAIR With assistance from Master Gardeners, the York County JUNIOR Master Gardeners are sponsoring an educational community "Bird FanFAIR!" on **Sunday, May 7, 2006**, from **1-5pm** at **Tabb High School**. The event will feature educational booths, activities, and crafts, all celebrating birds! Admission is free and the event is open to the public. Our festival is based on the Flying WILD bird festivals as described at www.flyingwild.org with ideas from International Migratory Bird Day described at www.birdday.org.

Please share with us your connections with bird clubs, nature groups, scout troops, natural resource experts, schools, community organizations, and speakers knowledgeable about wild birds and their conservation. Grant funding for this festival has been awarded by NREE and Nature of Learning. Barb Dunbar is in the process of setting up a 4-hour Flying WILD workshop for interested MGs/teachers in early Spring. If you have any ideas or are interested in helping us produce a fun-filled, educational community bird festival, please contact Jody Turner, 867-1135, turnertribe@cox.net or the Extension Office.

"A bird does not sing because it has an answer. It sings because it has a song." *Chinese proverb as quoted from the Flying WILD Educator's Guide*

Home Gardener Program Spring Session **March 18, 25, April 1, April 8, 2006 - 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM**

Volunteers are needed for the *Home Gardener Program* which will be offered to the general public this year. This is a two part program with four classes in the spring and four classes in the fall and is taught on alternate years. The program was designed for people wanting to learn about gardening without becoming Master Gardeners. The coursework will be similar to the Master Gardener Training Program but much less in-depth and the instructors will be experienced Master Gardeners. The spring classes will be at the Yorktown Library – York County Branch, on the following **Saturdays: March 18, 25, April 1, and April 8** from **9:30AM to 12:30 PM**. I will soon be contacting previous instructors and will also need new instructors, moderators and facilitators for the class. **You do not need to commit to all four classes.** If you are interested please contact me at 643-6314 or nanthompson2@yahoo.com *Nancy Thompson*

The Horticultural Extravaganza 2006 The 2006 Horticultural Extravaganza is just around the corner. The daylong event scheduled on **March 11** from **8:15 to 3:00** at **Tabb High School** will include a variety of horticultural topics on plants, landscaping and gardening on the Peninsula. **Volunteers are still needed**, especially on the Equipment Committee and Facilities (Setup/Tear-down) Committee. If you would like to volunteer in any capacity, please e-mail or contact the Coordinator, Ellen Calle, 868-1207 (e.calle@coxnet) or the Co-Coordinator, Jan Puliafico, 875-5522 (vpuliafico@worldnet.att.net).

Care of Common Plants (CCP) Remember CPI? (Those initials stood for County Property Inventory, an ambitious program to inventory all the perennials on York County Property, record their location and descriptions on a database, register the location on the county Global Information System (GIS) files, and enable the county grounds crews to access care and feeding instruction on the Internet, while using a GPS to determine location of each individual plant).

Well, as it turns out, the technology and the real world have not quite caught up with this great set of ideas. So, we have decided to shorten the plan, get the materials up to date, review the "Common Plants of the Peninsula" book, and the "Plants of Hampton Roads" listing, and combine all those materials on the VCE /County web site, with a listing of plants, pictures, descriptions, feeding and care, by the months of the year. We are going to call this project "Care of Common Plants" (on the Peninsula/in Tidewater/in Hampton Roads). We need Master Gardener volunteers to help with descriptions, care instructions, pictures, sorting this all out, and developing the individual web pages. Hear more about this at the February planning meeting. This is a terrific educational opportunity while completing your service hours. The name may change, if you want it to. *Jim Eagle*

February 2006

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2 Learning Garden Meeting 9:30-12	3	4 Pruning Clinic Grafton TruValue 10-12
5	6 HMG Pruning Training 1-3	7	8	9 L Garden 9:30-12 Maymont F & G Show	10 Maymont F & G Show	11 Home Pruning Clinic in Upper York County 10-12 Maymont F & G Show
12	13	14 YCMG Planning Mtg 9:30 at St. Luke's	15 Use of Office Resources Trng 9:30 – 11:00 Gardening Hear Say WHRO 89.5 FM 12:00-1:00	16 L Garden 9:30-12	17	18 Pruning Clinic at Ken Matthews Nsy 10-12
19	20 Presidents' Day County Offices CLOSED	21	22 Henrico Co MG Pruning Tng 9-12:30, 1-3 Richmond	23 L Garden 9:30-12	24	25 Pruning Clinic 10-12 Running Man
26	27	28 Hort Therapy 10:15 York River Conv	1	2 L Garden Mtg 9:30-12:00 Norfolk MG Pruning Tng 9-12 Botanical Gdns	3 Last day to register for the Hort Extravaganza	